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HILLSIDE ORCHARDS NEED COVER TO PROTECT SOIL FROM EROSION

Applying flat-land farming practices to hillside orchards is likely to be disastrous unless measures are taken to protect the soil from erosion. Cover crops offer one of the most effective and economical of these protective measures.



Severe soil erosion in an apricot orchard resulting from heavy rainfall on clean cultivated land.



The same orchard several years later. A protective cover shields the soil from run-off waters. Erosion is being gradually halted.



A common practice is to plant an annual cover crop in the fall which is plowed under or disked down in the spring.

A development of the practice of plowing under cover crops is light disking. This produces a "trashy" fallow giving protection from late rains.



A current practice used successfully by many orchardists on both steep and gentle slopes is the establishment of a permanent undisturbed cover to prevent soil erosion.



An orchard that has been destroyed by erosion. Such conditions cause lowered standards of living and even abandonment of farms.